



# Solutions

RESTORED HOPE  
REMEDIAL SERVICES

Volume 2, Issue 2

## Is it ever too late for help?

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#### Focus on Reading

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RESTORED HOPE REMEDIAL SERVICES is a 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax deductible.

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### Success can be achieved at any age!

Larry was a young man in his mid-twenties at the time his name came up during a conference with his boss. In the conference, which concerned his boss's daughter and her learning needs, the question was raised, "Do you only help kids with reading problems, or can you also help adults?" A positive answer drew the following explanation.

"I have an employee who is one of the most competent workers that I have ever had. I leave the company in his hands when I leave town, knowing that when I return everything will have been done right. I trust him completely. The problem is, he is still an apprentice at his trade. He ought to be a journeyman, but he can't read well enough to pass the test for advancement to journeyman status, even though he knows everything that is on the test. Is there anything you can do to help?"

A subsequent interview with Larry revealed that he had been frustrated by reading all his life. He had been in remedial reading and learning disabilities classes since the first grade. He had been provided with special tutors all through school. When he graduated from high school he was aware that he still could not read. So, he hired tutors to work with him as an adult, using the Laubach adult literacy techniques and other methods. Testing showed that, despite all the time and labor that had been devoted to his reading problems by very dedicated and very competent people, Larry's reading level was still at the second grade level.

Testing at RESTORED HOPE REMEDIAL SERVICES showed that Larry had a very severe deficit in phonemic awareness (see page 2). Therefore, therapy was begun to correct the problem, using the Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing (LiPS) program. Progress was immediately evident, and Larry continued in the program from June to the end of the summer, working for one hour daily. He began reading books at home, and confided that he was getting considerable enjoyment from reading signs as he drove around town.

By mid-September, his reading had improved to the point that he wanted to take the journeyman's test. He failed the test, but was not discouraged. As he confidently stated, "I was just nervous. I could read it, and I knew everything on it. I'll get it next time." In mid-October he retook the journeyman exam and passed it, and immediately began talking about studying to take specialized exams in his trade.



## FROM OUR DIRECTOR'S DESK



Ken Schmidt

Restored Hope Remedial Services has just experienced a phenomenal summer! We worked with 20 students, some of whom regularly traveled as far as 60 miles for our services, and I tested 12 children from Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois. We had three clinicians working and I worked with a number of clients as well. We were able to help so many because our facility had the space necessary to handle them. This brings me to the reason for this article.

Restored Hope needs your help. An opportunity has presented itself for our clinic to purchase the building in which we currently lease space. For about the same amount that we would spend for a lease, we could acquire an asset that would give us room for future expansion. We would have a facility which could include space for professionals who offer complementary services so clients would not have to travel to other areas of the city and state to find help for their children.

We are seeking donations for the purpose of purchasing and remodeling this building and repairing the parking lot. We are trying to raise as much as possible toward the purchase and repairs needed to make the facility leasable, because we could rent space out on the upper level to help cover the costs of monthly mortgage payments, insurance, maintenance, etc. The more we can raise now, the less financial burden Restored Hope will have to deal with in the future, and any income from leasing could then be used to fund our programs and pay expenses. Since we are a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, **all donations are tax deductible.**

Could you help us at this critical time? If you have parents, brothers or sisters, aunts or uncles, or others who share our concerns for children with learning difficulties, we would welcome their help as well. We need to raise \$60,000 for the parking lot, which needs an "extreme makeover", and \$150,000 for the building (which is a bargain!). We already have received \$10,000 for the parking lot and a pledge of \$25,000 for the building purchase from parents of former clients. While we do not expect everyone to match those, we hope you and others can help us make a major dent in the amount we need. Also, please check with your employer to see whether they make "matching" donations.

We thank you for any help you can give. We are privileged to call you friends and to partner with you in helping children succeed in school and ultimately—in life. God bless you.

## F.Y.I. What is "Phonemic Awareness"? How it is linked to reading difficulties.

Many factors affect reading. One of the most important is phonemic awareness. Researchers from the *National Institutes of Health* have stated that lack of phonemic awareness "is the most powerful determinant of the likelihood of failure to learn to read."

Phonemic awareness involves the awareness of sounds. Specifically, it involves the ability to judge exactly what those sounds are doing within words. This ability to make judgments about sounds is the basis of phonetic reading and spelling.

These judgments are generally considered to fall into one of three categories: sameness and difference, num-

ber, and order. For example, an individual may have difficulty spelling or reading words such as "pin," "pen," or "pan" because he does not perceive that the words have differing vowel sounds. Or, he might leave letters out of a word when spelling it simply because he doesn't perceive that there is a difference between the number of sounds he is hearing and what he is writing on his paper. A person might read the word "clasp" as being "claps" because he doesn't perceive that he has switched the order of the final two sounds. These three judgments work together and build upon one another to make phonetic reading and spelling possible.

(continued on page 3)



## Why can't my child read?

Reading is complicated. Many factors can prevent a child or adult from being able to read well.

The first step in reading is for information to be taken from the page and sent to the brain for processing. This requires good vision. Good vision is not just visual acuity; one can have 20/20 vision, and still have visual difficulties that interfere with reading. Problems controlling the movement of the eyes, working both eyes together as a team, or maintaining clear visual focus can all make reading difficult.

Even if the eyes are working correctly, visual information must be accurately processed by the brain. If the brain does not interpret the information from the eyes accurately--if the information is distorted or "scrambled"--reading will be affected.

Once information is processed visually, three other elements must be present if one is to be a good reader:

1. One must be able to use phonics to "sound out" words. To do this requires good "phonemic awareness," the ability to determine exactly what sounds are doing within words.

2. The English language includes many words that do not "play fair" by phonetic rules. If reading is to be fluent, many words must be instantly recognized by their appearance. This requires a specialized form of visual memory sometimes referred to as "symbol imagery."

3. The whole purpose of reading is to understand what is written. Being able to read words accurately does not guarantee that they are understood. A good reader must comprehend what a passage literally means, and also perceive how the details of a passage relate to one another.

Even when all the above skills are in place, they must be accomplished very quickly if reading is to be efficient; processing speed and efficiency are important because they affect reading rate. Working memory, the ability to temporarily hold information in memory while integrating it with new information, is critical to comprehension. Attentional skills may affect reading, as can many other factors.

Because reading is so complex, it is rare that simple tutoring will have a major effect on correcting reading disabilities. Neither will randomly choosing a program, no matter how good that program is. A "shotgun" approach to reading difficulties does not work because there are so many potential causes.

If reading problems are to be successfully treated, it must first be determined exactly what is causing the difficulty. This requires careful testing prior to treatment. Then, the identified problems must be addressed using very specific, targeted interventions. Reading problems are correctable if the causes are first correctly diagnosed and are then followed by the use of specific programs to correct specific problems. This is the approach used by *RESTORED HOPE REMEDIAL SERVICES*.

## F.Y.I. (continued)

### Symptoms of Phonemic Deficits

- Difficulty with vowel sounds within words
- Problems with unfamiliar words
- Confuses similar words
- Switching sounds within words
- Adding extra sounds to words
- Leaves sounds out of words
- Difficulty with rhyme
- Problems with blending (putting sounds together) and segmenting (breaking sounds apart)
- Does not easily apply phonics to reading and spelling



## HOPE for Dyslexia

Dyslexia is often thought of as a condition in which individuals switch letters around in words, or in which letters or numbers are read or written backwards. However, educators currently define dyslexia simply as, "A significant difference between intelligence and reading ability." This is a simple definition, but dyslexia is not simple to deal with. Before dyslexia can be dealt with, three questions must be addressed:

- Exactly how is the child being affected? Is he unable to "sound out" the words? Is his reading very slow and/or very jerky and rough? Is his comprehension poor? Do sight words cause difficulty? Is reading very tiring, or painful, or boring? Do letters or words seem to switch around or change their appearance? Are other areas affected, such as spelling, writing, attention, and communication? There are many types of reading problems, and how the need is addressed will depend on the type of difficulty.

- What is the cause, or causes, for the symptoms the child is displaying? Although one can make guesses based on symptoms, the only way that one can accurately answer this question is to test for known conditions that can affect reading. There is no single cause that applies to all children with reading difficulties. As with a medical condition, treatment should not be attempted without a clear diagnosis of the problem.

- What can be done about the condition? We must be certain that what is being treated is actually the cause, not just the symptoms. Fortunately, there are a number of remedial programs available that actually correct the underlying problems that cause reading difficulties, and thus free the child to discover that reading is a pleasure, not a frustrating chore.

Dyslexia can be helped. That help does not have to be confined to teaching children (or adults) to cope with the problem. There are causes for reading difficulties, and in many cases, those causes can be eliminated. For dyslexia, as with many learning difficulties, there is *HOPE*.

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### Effective Solutions for Learning Difficulties



We're on the Web!  
[www.restored-hope.org](http://www.restored-hope.org)

**Mission Statement** To use advances and insights from brain research to provide appropriate testing, accurate diagnosis, and effective intervention of learning difficulties; thereby removing the barriers that prevent children and adults from reaching and maintaining their created potential.